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DRN - [REDACTED]

August 30, 1954

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BI - [REDACTED]

Biographic needs for translation of Near Eastern foreign newspapers

As a result of our conversation this morning regarding FDD translating services and their possible value to the Near East Branch of BI, I would like to put the following ideas on record:

FDD might excerpt biographic notes on cards, ready for BI filing: This special arrangement, especially valuable for BI since it would minimize our processing work, has actually existed in the past, by a special arrangement between FDD and the Far East Branch of BI. It worked fine while it lasted, and was discontinued because FDD was cut—I believe—and found that it could no longer afford such a "special service to two customers" (CIA/BR was the other customer). Arguments in favor of this arrangement are:

1. BI is not, in fact, just "one customer." BI is the collection point for biographic data for the entire Federal Government, and is therefore a channel for serving all Federal agencies. By making sure that biographic items from the foreign language press get into BI files, FDD would be providing the most convenient cumulative biographic coverage of the press to all its customers.
2. Specifically biographic items are rarely of widespread interest at the time they happen or appear in the press, so that wide dissemination of these items is seldom necessary. Yet in cumulative form over the years, the press is an irreplaceable source of biographic details. Limited, direct, dissemination to BI of biographic items is therefore logical. (In cases where a biographic item is of general interest FDD can still disseminate the translation as widely as appropriate.)
3. By direct discussions between BI branch chiefs and FDD translation supervisors it is possible to progressively narrow the selection of biographic items down to those of real value to the biographic files. Thus a minimum of unnecessary material will be translated.
4. A sample standard register card showing a biographic item in form for filing in BI is attached as exhibit 1.

FDD might excerpt other items classified under the NIS Outline, ready for filing: The possibility of feeding translations directly into other intelligence files than BI's, in a form exactly suited to the filing needs of other agencies, might provide a great economy in processing by each customer agency, and also in distribution. One wasteful feature of our present processing of intelligence is the common necessity of re-processing documents which represent the product of other agencies. In FDD's case it might be possible to eliminate some of that re-processing. A sample form in which FDD might issue translation items ready for filing is attached as exhibit 2.

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